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Comments: Dear Middle Fork Ranger District,

The Southern Willamette Forest Collaborative (SWFC) Landscape Planning Collaboration Committee (LPCC) would like to register its support for the Steeple Rock Rigdon (SRR) Draft Environmental Analysis proposed action. The LPCC was borne out of the Rigdon Collaboration Committee (RCC), which has worked closely with the Forest Service on this project since 2016, including numerous field tours and meetings.

In 2019, RCC helped to develop the Rigdon Landscape Analysis (RLA). The RLA identified important values on the Rigdon landscape, and led to Zones of Agreement (ZOA's), consensus-based recommendations for the Forest Service's Rigdon projects. This EA showcases an approach that meets the ZOA's goals of improving ecosystem, economy, and social wellbeing by:

- * Restoring historical open forest conditions through variable density thinning on over 3,000 acres of densely covered managed stands under 80 years of age
- * Increasing aquatic habitat diversity and watershed health in over 1,000 acres of riparian areas, including floodplain restoration and improving aquatic organism passage, as well as by managing dispersed camping along waterways
- * Returning to a frequent fire low-intensity regime through prescribed fire
- * Promoting social and economic opportunities by sustainably and responsibly harvesting 40 million board feet of timber and creating stewardship opportunities that would inject much needed capital into our local economies
- * Meadow restoration which supports the goal of restoring diverse vegetation types

Projects such as SRR are instrumental in remedying the wildfire crisis. Shaded fuel breaks and strategic harvest are crucial for community protection in eastern Lane County. To achieve a fire-resilient and biodiverse landscape, the LPCC firmly supports the inclusion of burn blocks in the project. We know that forest thinning and prescribed burning are the most effective tools for this goal. The LPCC urges the Forest Service to ensure all prescribed fire treatments are completed, using every resource at their disposal.

Thank you sincerely for your dedication to this project. SWFC looks forward to its timely implementation and continuing cooperation with the Forest Service.